

Remarks

The applicants have carefully considered the official action dated August 24, 2006, and the references it cites. In the official action, claims 17, 18, and 23-26 were rejected and claims 19-22 were objected to as being dependent on a rejected base claim but indicated as allowable if rewritten in independent form. In particular, claims 17, 18, and 23-26 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as anticipated by Curry et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,625,170). Additionally, claims 17-26 were rejected on the ground of nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting over claims 1-13 of U.S. Patent No. 6,400,818.

By way of this response, independent claim 17 has been cancelled and claim 19 has been amended to be in independent form and to improve its clarity. Additionally, claims 18 and 20-26 have been amended, claims 27 and 28 have been added for consideration, and the specification has been amended to claim the benefit of prior applications and to correct minor typographical errors. No new matter has been added. In view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks, the applicants respectfully traverse the outstanding rejections and respectfully submit that all pending claims are in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration is respectfully requested.

As an initial matter, the applicants submit that claim 19, which was indicated as containing allowable subject matter in the official action, has been rewritten in independent form and is now in condition for allowance. Accordingly, independent claim 19 and claims 18 and 20-23 dependent thereon are now believed to be in condition for allowance.

In the official action, claims 17-26 were rejected on the ground of non-statutory obviousness-type double patenting as unpatentable over claims 1-13 of U.S. Patent No. 6,400,818. The applicants have filed a terminal disclaimer concurrently with this response in compliance with 37 C.F.R. §1.321 to obviate the double patenting rejection.

The applicants respectfully submit that independent claim 24, as amended, is allowable over Curry et al. Independent claim 24 recites, *inter alia*, determining if an interLATA call is between a first virtual private network and a second virtual private network, the first and second virtual private networks facilitating at least one of abbreviated dialing or intercom dialing. Curry et al. fail to describe determining if an interLATA call is between a first virtual private network and a second virtual private network, the first and second virtual private networks facilitating at least one of abbreviated dialing or intercom dialing, as recited in claim 24.

Curry et al. describe a call set up and control method for two or more telecommunications networks. [Curry et al., Abstract]. The networks described by Curry et al. are operated by different local exchange carriers and may include an interexchange carrier network. [Curry et al., 11:7-16 and FIG. 3]. End office switching systems couple telephone sets of end users, in which one or more end office switches may further connect to a tandem switch. [Curry et al., 11:25-33]. The tandem switch of the network typically connects to another tandem switch in a separate network and each network may also employ a service control point (SCP) to perform advanced intelligent network (AIN) type services, such as 800 number call processing. [Curry et al., 11:30-44 and 12:8-15].

Although the call set up and control method described by Curry et al. facilitates communication between local exchange carriers via an interexchange carrier network, Curry et al. do not describe a virtual private network, much less determining if an interLATA call is between a first virtual private network and a second virtual private network. Additionally, Curry et al. also fail to describe abbreviated dialing and/or intercom dialing, as recited in independent claim 24.

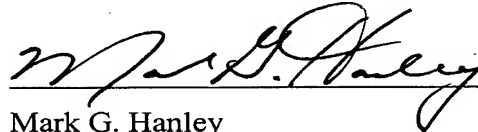
As a result, the applicants respectfully submit that the rejection of claim 24, and claims 25 and 26 dependent thereon, must be withdrawn for at least the foregoing reasons.

New independent claim 27 is also allowable. Claim 27 recites, *inter alia*, receiving a first query, determining, based on the first query, if the call is an interLATA call, receiving a second query from a hub point at a control point, determining, based on the second query, if the call is to a virtual private network, and when the call is to the virtual private network, sending a response to route the call to a second point in a LATA. No such method is described or suggested by the art of record. Accordingly, claim 28, which depends from independent claim 27, is also allowable.

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, the applicants respectfully submit that this application is now in condition for allowance. If there are any remaining matters that the examiner would like to discuss, the examiner is invited to contact the undersigned representative at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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